

**BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

In the Matter of the Suspension or	)	
	)	CONSENT ORDER OF
Revocation of the Educator Certificate of	)	
	)	SUSPENSION
Rhonda K. Stevens	)	
	)	
Certificate 177370	)	

**SUMMARY OF THE CASE**

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on February 8, 2006. On May 27, 2005, the South Carolina Department of Education (Department) sent Rhonda K. Stevens, a notice of her right to a hearing before the State Board concerning the possible revocation of her South Carolina educator certificate 177370 by certified mail, return receipt, restricted delivery, and regular mail. Ms. Stevens received the notice as evidenced by a postal receipt bearing her signature. Ms. Stevens requested a hearing, but subsequently agreed, through her attorney, to waive her right to a hearing and to accept the suspension of her certificate for a period that would commence on February 8, 2006, and end on February 7, 2009. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to order the suspension of Ms. Stevens' certificate for the agreed upon period.

Rhonda K.  
Stevens

Initial Here

Date

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

Ms. Stevens holds a valid South Carolina certificate with over nine years of educator experience. Ms. Stevens served as principal of Hunter Street Elementary School in York County School District One (District) from July 2002, until January 7, 2004, when she resigned from the District following her arrest on the charge of embezzlement of public funds. On January 4, 2006, Ms. Stevens pled guilty to the charge and received a sentence of probation in exchange for repayment of the funds in question, approximately \$44,000.

### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

"The State Board of Education may, for just cause, either revoke or suspend the certificate of any person." S.C. Code Ann. §59-25-150 (2004), S.C. Code Ann. §59-25-160 (2004); 24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-58. Just cause includes unprofessional conduct, dishonesty, and crime against the law of this State or the United States. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2004). The State Board finds that the information presented supports its determination that just cause exists to suspend Ms. Stevens' certificate 177370, commencing on February 8, 2006, through February 7, 2009. If Ms. Stevens wishes to have her certificate reinstated at the end of the suspension period, Ms. Stevens must make a written request to the Office of Educator Certification of the Department and she must pass a character and fitness review by the State Board.

South Carolina State Board of Education

By: /S/ Joe Isaac

Joe Isaac

Chair

Columbia, South Carolina

February 8, 2006

I, Rhonda K Stevens, S.C. Educator Certificate 177370 do hereby agree to the proposed Consent Order of Suspension, consisting of two pages, and understand that this Order will be presented to the State Board of Education for approval on February 8, 2006.

/S/ Rhonda K. Stevens  
Rhonda K Stevens

1/26/2006  
Date